

SEPTEMBER 18, 2018

## Is Your Clutter and Disorganization Out of Control?

Most of us are somewhat messy, but hoarding is a serious condition linked to anxiety and obsessive compulsive behavior that affects approximately 2 to 5 percent of the population. Take this self-test to understand where you fall on the messiness to hoarding spectrum.

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[Click Here to Take the Self-Test](#)

## A Day in the Life of a Teen With Dyslexia

By [The Understood Team](#)

For teenagers with [dyslexia](#), every class can be a struggle because they all involve some aspect of reading and spelling. Dyslexia is also connected to some social, emotional and behavioral issues. Use this visual guide to see how dyslexia can affect a high-schooler's daily life.

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## The Relationship with Birth Parents Post-TPR: What to Consider

The completion of a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) and the finalization of adoption opens a new chapter for you and your child, as well as your child's birth family. For some families it may mean a temporary or permanent severing of all ties. For others it may mean an opportunity to forge new relationships without the oversight and restrictions of child welfare involvement or court orders.

Here are a few things you might consider as you navigate the post-TPR/adoption waters:

- Safety and well-being for your child and family need to be your first and foremost consideration. Unfortunately, there **are** instances where contact post-TPR simply is not safe or in the best interest of your child, particularly if the child expresses fear, indicates he or she does not want contact, or there was a “no contact” order prior to the TPR/adoption.
- Have you had an overall good relationship with the birth family prior to the TPR? Were you able to successfully co-parent? If so, your child can only benefit from continuing that relationship post-TPR. You might consider inviting the birth family to birthday parties, dance recitals, soccer games, or even just Sunday dinner.
- Give it time. Avoid the temptation to assume that, if you left the door open for birth parents after the adoption and you have not heard from them, it means they are not interested in maintaining contact. A TPR is a devastating and emotional event for any parent, even if it is voluntary. Allow for the different ways people grieve and consider that it may just be too painful to have contact for a period following the TPR.
- Plan to continue with therapeutic services. It's perfectly normal to want to take a breather from all the mandatory appointments, meetings, and services that kept you running 24/7. Unfortunately, the trauma doesn't disappear when the adoption finalizes. In fact, depending on your child's age, the grief and loss that comes with the finalization of adoption may result in your child needing additional professional services.

Ultimately, you know your child better than anyone and are the best judge of what is in your child's best interest. Fortunately, a child can never have the love and support of too many people.

DO YOU

# REACT

OR

# RESPOND

*to your kids*



"Stop that crying right now!"

"If you two don't stop fighting, I'm turning this car around!"

"What?! You spilled your juice again!"

"Darn right it's not fair. Life's not fair. Get used to it."

"Another 'C'? What's going on with you?"

"That's enough whining, young lady."

"I've had it with you!"



"You look upset, do you need a hug?"

"I am pulling over. When the car is quiet, I will continue driving."

"Oops, let's get a rag and get that mess cleaned up."

"I can tell you're upset about my decision."

"It looks like you are struggling in math. Is there anything I can do to help?"

"Please use a calm voice when asking me for something."

"I'm feeling frustrated right now, I'm going to take a walk to calm down."

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What you do in the first five minutes after your child gets home from school can set the tone for the whole evening.  
**Be kind.**  
Greet them with warm acceptance and ask them what they need.



## Solve that After-School Crabbiness?

The bus pulls up and you brace yourself. She comes flying off the bus backpack bouncing and arms flailing. You already know there is going to be an issue as soon as she walks in the door. Sure enough, she barges in the door yelling and eyes flashing, ready to lash out. You quickly try to manage the behavior by telling her, "Calm down or I'm going to have to put you in time out until you can pull it together!" She escalates more and is sent to her room. It's a predictable dance, you know each others' steps and cues. But this is a dance you don't want to be part of through another school year.

## Why does this happen?

- When kids are in school all day they are receiving a **constant barrage of distracting or annoying sensory input** all around them (the loud cafeteria, echoing in gym, pencils scratching, fans whirring). This environment is very stressful for a lot of kids, even ones who don't have problems processing sensory input.
- Add to that, limited movement because kids need to **sit still** most of the day, and are under **constant pressure to focus**.
- They may feel **performance anxiety** if things come easier to other children.
- They also may be receiving **rejection** by unkind peers or teachers at school as well.

This combination is exhausting and kids often arrive home feeling discouraged and overwhelmed. Their stress can come pouring out in the form of anger at parents and siblings, demanding behavior, or being overly silly and physical.

So, if your child frequently returns from school acting like a mini-Godzilla waiting to trash something or someone, it doesn't mean you have a "problem child" or you are deficient as a parent. There's a good reason for this seemingly inappropriate behavior. It's because your child has been working hard all day to hold it together, and they are tapped out. Research indicates that **self-control is a limited resource**, and your child has probably drained their self-control tank down to the last fumes.

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